

Amendments to the Claims:

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

1-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) One or more computer memories collectively containing an advertising targeting data structure, comprising a plurality of entries, each entry corresponding to a user and containing:

information identifying a test group to which the user belongs, the identified test group having been selected for the user without regard for user profile information, the identified test group indicating which of a plurality of sequences of conditions will be applied when an advertising request originating with the user is received; and

for each of the conditions of the indicated sequence of conditions, information identifying a treatment subgroup to which the user belongs, the identified treatment subgroup having been selected for the user without regard for user profile information, the identified treatment subgroup indicating which of a plurality of advertising treatments will be applied when the condition is the first condition in the sequence of conditions to be satisfied.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Withdrawn) A method in a computer system for analyzing user targeting results, comprising:

for an advertising targeting program having a plurality of independent dimensions, selecting a dimension in which to perform a comparison;

for user targeting effectiveness metrics each having a value in each of the independent dimensions, aggregating the metrics for each value of the selected dimension; and

comparing the different values of the selected dimension by comparing the corresponding aggregated metrics.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the selected dimension is comprised of two or more testing groups each corresponding to a different user data analysis approach, and wherein the effectiveness of the different user data analysis approaches is compared.

A³ 20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the selected dimension is comprised of two or more advertising messages all displayed to users in the same segment, and wherein the effectiveness of the different advertising messages for users in the segment is compared.

21. (Withdrawn) One or more computer memories collectively containing an advertising targeting result data structure reflecting the result of targeting using test groups, conditions for each test groups, and treatment subgroups for each condition, the data structure comprising:

for each distinct combination of (a) one of the test groups and (b) one treatment subgroup for each of the conditions for the test group, an advertising effectiveness metric aggregated across all users that are assigned to the test group and the treatment subgroup for each of the conditions for the test group, such that, to determine a level of effectiveness of the conditions of a test group, the effectiveness metrics for users assigned to that test group may be aggregated, and such that, to determine a level of effectiveness of a treatment of a treatment subgroup, the effectiveness metrics for users assigned to that treatment may be aggregated.

22. (Withdrawn) The computer memories of claim 21 wherein the effectiveness metric is click-throughs.

23. (Withdrawn) The computer memories of claim 21 wherein the effectiveness metric is conversion rate.

24. (Withdrawn) The computer memories of claim 21 wherein the effectiveness metric is average sales.

25. (Withdrawn) The computer memories of claim 21 wherein the effectiveness metric is session length.

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26. (Withdrawn) The computer memories of claim 21 wherein the effectiveness metric is user registration rate.

27-29. (Cancelled)

30. (New) A method in a computing system for evaluating alternative advertising strategies, comprising:

for each of a plurality of users:

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in the computing system, randomly selecting one of a plurality of different sequences of conditions to apply to the user when an advertising request is received for the user, and

in the computing system, for at least one of the conditions in the condition sequence selected for the user, randomly selecting one of a plurality of different advertising messages associated with the condition to present to the user when the condition is the first condition of the sequence that is satisfied by profile information for the user; and

each time an advertising request is received for one of the plurality of users:

in the computing system, applying to the user the condition sequence that was randomly selected for the user to identify the first condition of the sequence that is satisfied by profile information for the user, and

in the computing system, presenting the user the advertising message associated with the identified condition that was randomly selected for the user.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, further comprising:

in the computing system, generating an assessment of the effectiveness of the advertising messages presented to each user;

AA in the computing system, for each of the plurality of condition sequences, aggregating the effectiveness assessments of the users for whom the condition sequence was selected;

in the computing system, selecting as the most effective of the plurality of condition sequences the condition sequence having the highest aggregated effectiveness assessment;

in the computing system, for each of the plurality of advertising message, aggregating the effectiveness assessments of the users for whom the advertising message was selected; and

in the computing system, selecting as the most effective of the plurality of advertising messages the advertising message having the highest aggregated effectiveness assessment.

32. (New) A method in a computing system for evaluating alternative advertising strategies, comprising:

in the computing system, receiving an advertising request for a user during the duration of an advertising campaign, the received request containing an identifier uniquely identifying the user;

if the user has not been added to an advertising test group and advertising test subgroup for the campaign:

in the computing system, without reference to any profile information for the user, selecting an advertising test group among a plurality of advertising test groups, each advertising test group of the plurality corresponding to a different sequence of conditions,

in the computing system, assigning the user to the selected advertising test group using the identifier contained in the received request,

in the computing system, without reference to any profile information for the user, selecting one advertising test subgroup among a plurality of advertising test subgroups that are associated with the advertising test group to which the user is assigned, each advertising test subgroup of the plurality corresponding to a different set of advertising messages to be presented in response to the application of the sequence of conditions corresponding to the advertising test group to which the user is assigned, and

in the computing system, assigning the user to the selected advertising test subgroup using the identifier contained in the received request;

in the computing system, applying to profile information for the user the sequence of conditions corresponding to the advertising test group to which the user is assigned to identify the first condition of the sequence that is satisfied; and

in the computing system, presenting to the user an advertising message associated with the identified condition that is among the set of advertising messages corresponding to the advertising test subgroup to which the user is assigned.

33. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the acts of claim 32 are performed for a plurality of advertising requests received for a plurality of users, the method further comprising:

in the computing system, generating an assessment of the effectiveness of the advertising messages presented to each user;

in the computing system, for each of the plurality of condition sequences, aggregating the effectiveness assessments of the users for whom the condition sequence was selected;

in the computing system, selecting as the most effective of the plurality of condition sequences the condition sequence having the highest aggregated effectiveness assessment;

in the computing system, for each of the plurality of advertising message, aggregating the effectiveness assessments of the users for whom the advertising message was selected; and

AA in the computing system, selecting as the most effective of the plurality of advertising messages the advertising message having the highest aggregated effectiveness assessment.

34. (New) The method of claim 32 wherein the selecting acts are performed by, in the computing system, selecting an advertising test group and an advertising test subgroup that tend to conform the relative sizes of the advertising test groups and advertising test subgroups to predetermined relative sizes for the advertising test group and advertising test subgroups.
